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Attachments: [AA Report Summary for WH- Privileged- DO NOT DISCLOSE 10-18-17.docx](#)
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Monument Report Themes and Highlights

Limits on Antiquities Act designation:

- Defining the objects that may be included within a monument as being “historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest;”
- Restricting the authority to Federal lands; and
- Limiting the size of the monument to “the smallest area compatible with proper care and management of the objects.”

Administrations have expanded both the size and scope of monument designations, broadly interpreting what constitutes an “object of historic or scientific interest” has been extended to include landscape areas, biodiversity, view sheds, World War II desert bombing craters, and remoteness.

No President should use the authority under the Act to restrict public access, prevent hunting and fishing, burden private land, or eliminate traditional land uses, unless such action is needed to protect the object.

The executive power under the Act is not a substitute for a lack of congressional action on protective land designations.

President Trump was right to call on the review of monuments over 100,000 acres designated since 1996 or designated without adequate local support.

Existing monuments have been modified by successive Presidents in the past, including 18 reductions in the size of monuments.

The methodology Interior used for the review consisted of three steps.

- The first step was to gather the facts
- As directed by the President, the second step was to ensure that the local voice was heard
- The final step was to review policies on public access, hunting and fishing rights, traditional use such as timber production and grazing, economic and environmental impacts, potential legal conflicts, and provide a report to the President no later than August 24, 2017.

The review found that each monument was unique in terms of justification, some monuments were either arbitrary or likely politically motivated or boundaries could not be supported by science or reasons of practical resource management.

Some monuments reflect a long public debate process and are largely settled and strongly supported by the local community.

Proponents tended to promote monument designation as a mechanism to prevent the sale or transfer of public land. This narrative is false and has no basis in fact. Public lands within a monument are federally owned and managed regardless of monument designation under the Act.

(b)(5) DPP

